1997

Winter

NCNA *Journal*

N.C. N.A.

NORTH CAROLINA NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION

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JOURNAL

WINTER 1997

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NCNA JOURNAL

Volume 23 number 1 Winter 1997

CONTENTS

1 President's Message

2. English Token Found in North Carolina

4. News From Around the State

6. Civil War Memento

7. More About Farthings in the Bible

8. Coin Show Calendar

12. Membership Application

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Members,

We are now starting a new year. There is good news and bad news.

First the sad news. N. C. N. A. member wish to offer their condolences to Russ Southworth and his family on the untimely death of his son, David, in early January.

We also have to announce the resignation of Dale Berube from the board of the North Carolina Numismatic Association for personal reasons. Dale, we thank you and your family for the enthusiastic service you have given the organization, and we hope to see more of you in the future.

Now the good news. Greg Cheek of Walkertown will take the seat vacated by Dale's resignation. Welcome aboard. It is always nice to have someone with a new perspective joining the organization's governing board.

More good news. Plans are moving ahead steadily for our next convention and coin show to be held in Greensboro on September 26th through September 28th. The board will meet at 5:30 PM on Saturday, February 15th to discuss plans for a bigger and better show for the new year. Visitors are welcome.

Will Jordan
President

EARLY ENGLISH TOKEN FOUND IN NORTH CAROLINA

Thomas Padgett and Halbert Carmichael

Our cover photo this issue is a recent numismatic find from the very early days of the English in what is now North Carolina.

An archeological excavation near Edenton sponsored by the North Carolina Department of Transportation has uncovered, among other artifacts, two 17th Century English tokens. The investigation carried out by Coastal Carolina Research of Tarboro, NC was instigated to recover archeological information about an area that would be disturbed by the widening of highway US 17 and building a new bridge over the Chowan River. The area was known as the "Southern Plantation." The site was also know to be part of the location of "Eden House", the home Governor Charles Eden built around 1714.

The investigators working between July and November 1996, found several buildings that pre-dated Eden House. These were "earth fast" houses, houses built with posts going directly into the ground as were many of the houses at Jamestown. Around the foundation of an "earth-fast" house they found numerous artifacts: pottery, porcelain, wine bottles, tobacco pipes and household items.

English Token shown along side a Quarter for scale

To numismatists the most interesting items were two English tokens dated 1669. The tokens were identified by Richard Doty of the Smithsonian Institution as half-penny tokens being issued by

Ambrose Ambler in Leeds. A large variety of tokens were issued by many English merchants between 1648 and 1672. It is known that these privately issued tokens were withdrawn from circulation in Britain after the government began issuing farthings and half pennies in 1672. They continued to circulate in the New World colonies for some years afterward.

Reverse of Ambrose Ambler Token

The two heavily corroded copper tokens were found in different locations in the archeological dig. The better preserved specimen was found in the rubble fill of what is believed to be the remains of a root cellar attached to one of the earth-fast houses. The second was recovered from the fill tossed into the well. Both these features contained other artifacts that the archeologists have so far dated to the first quarter of the eighteenth century. Both coins are very thin, probably due to corrosion.

The two tokens which are identical. Each has AMBROSE AMBLER surrounding two pipes and a tobacco bale on one side. The other reads IN LEEDS 1669 around a two line inscription in the center HALF PENNY decorated with several roses. Only the "H" of HALF is legible, but the spacing is such that a four letter word is all that would fit in the space. The pipes and tobacco bales clearly show a commercial connection with the New World when the tokens were manufactured. Was this anticipating their use on this side of the Atlantic?

When were the tokens brought to America, and what were they used for? These tantalizing questions are as yet unanswered. What is clear is that a numismatic connection between seventeenth century England and eighteenth century America has been established right here in North Carolina.

N. C. N. A. News

Bill Fivaz to Speak at Lower Cape Fear Coin Club

Bill Fivaz, former ANA Governor and author of The Cherrypicker's Guide, will speak at the Lower Cape Fear Coin Club on Wednesday, April 9, 1997, at 7:30 PM. The subject of the talk will be "Numismatic Terms and Definitions". Bill is an engaging and thoroughly knowledgable speaker. Let's welcome him to North Carolina.

The meeting is currently scheduled for the regular club meeting site in the Cameron Building on the campus of the University of North Carolina at Wilmington. Visitors are welcome.

Contact Gar Travis at 910-347-7122 for further details.

NUMISMATICS ON JEOPARDY

The final jeopardy question on a recent program was United States Currency. Your editor can claim to have given the answer even before the question was revealed.

The question as asked was: Of those persons shown on current United States currency, who is the most recently deceased.

I had thought that the question was going to be: Who is shown on the $50 bill?

Same answer. Would you have gotten it? Two out of the three contestants missed it.

See Page 7 or your Catalog of United States Currency for the correct answer.

Making Cents in the Laboratory

No one can say that we never talk sense at NCSU. I was using cents as a sample to show students the meaning of an average and a standard deviation. I would mix one pre-1982 coin with nine later coins or one post-1982 coin with nine older coins and then have the student weigh them. The purpose was to show the students what it looks like when you have an item that is not part of the same sample.

My surprise came when one of the students, Boyd Rogers, announced that his stepfather works for the firm that makes the planchets for the United States one cent coin. This is the Alltrista Zinc Products Company in Greenville, Tennessee. They make most, but not all, the planchets that are then struck at the United States Mint at either Philadelphia or Denver.

I understand that the company is an off-shoot or subsidiary of Ball Manufacturing of the famous Ball Mason jars. They had gotten into working non-ferrous metals by making tops for the jars used in home canning.

Along these lines. Have any of you seen the "gold" pennies. It is fairly simple to coat the outside of any copper coin with a thin layer of zinc producing something that looks like a zinc penny. The zinc coating in quite thin, and if carefully heated the copper migrates through the zinc to produce a beautiful yellow brass. I know that literally dozens of these have been produced in chemistry demonstrations around the state.

FLEA MARKET FIND

A Civil War Memento?

Bob Gurkin of Garner, North Carolina recently purchased a coin at the flea market at the North Carolina State Fairgrounds in Raleigh that may be of considerable historical interest. The coin is an 1860 silver dollar in what appears to be very good or fine condition. Nothing unusual about that. What is interesting is that the coin has engraved on it in large block letters, "C S A" and in smaller letters the phrase "Lt. Col. Dorsey Pender First North Carolina Regiment." The CSA is across the eagle. This coin would appear to be a memento of a relatively obscure Confederate general.

William Dorsey Pender was born in what is now Wilson County in 1834 . He graduated from West Point in 1854 and served in the United States Army prior to the Civil War rising to the rank of captain of dragoons. Joining the Confederates, he helped train recruits at Camp Mangum in Raleigh. Recognized as an outstanding young officer he rose to become a major general and led one of the three divisions that participated in what is incorrectly known as "Pickett's" charge at Gettysburg. Pickett's Virginians made up only one of the three divisions involved. The other two were North Carolinians led by Pender and Pettigrew. Pender had already received a supposedly minor wound during the second day of the battle. He died of this wound on July 18, 1863. Pender county is named for him.

The coin is apparently an authentic 1860 silver dollar. This is an uncommon but not a rare item. It catalogues in the $100 to $200 range in the Red Book depending on grade. Gurkin evidently bought it for $100. Gurkin hopes to sell it for $8000. Any takers out there? An object that can be reliably associated with a particular civil war era personality would certainly have much appeal.

The coin has been examined by Tom Belton, curator at the N. C. Museum of History and by Keith Strawn, a conservator at the same museum. Authenticity of the coin is not a problem; the time of the engraving is the point of uncertainty. The coin clearly circulated for a long time to get into the state it is now in. It could have been in circulation for only one year at most when Pender was a Lt. Colonel, because he was appointed colonel of the 3rd North Carolina Regiment on May 16, 1861. From the photos available, it is not possible to tell how worn the engraving is.

More about Farthings in the Bible

Halbert Carmichael

Sally McLeod Owens of Raleigh responded to my question about the biblical reference to a farthing and in Matthew 10:29.

Sally sends a number of quotes which answer several questions but leave even more room for speculation about monetary matters in Biblical times.

The quotation is rendered in the King James version in Matthew 10:29 as: "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing?" In the New Revised Standard Version it is: "Are not two sparrows sold for a penny?" The same thought is rendered in Luke 12:5 as "Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings?" in the King James Version and "Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies?" in the Revised Standard Version.

My first observation is that some enterprising entrepreneur was missing a bet. The birds were worth twenty-five per cent more in Luke than in Matthew.

The second observation is that the King James translators picked what was to them the smallest coin of commerce, the farthing, which was still a tiny silver coin at the beginning of the seventeenth century. The twentieth century translators also chose to use the term widely applied to the smallest coin of current commerce, even if most of the English speaking world labeled their smallest coin a "cent."

Well, what was the coin actually called in Biblical times.? Sally checked the reference out with the Strong Concordance and the Greek Dictionary. The Greek New Testament uses the word kodrantn, transliterated kodrantan and pronounced cod-rahn-tain. In English translations of ancient Greek currency kodrantan is frequently spelled quadrans.

The name for the birds translates literally as "little sparrows." As an avid bird watcher, I thought that all sparrows were little. By the way, the King James translators were almost certainly referring to the bird known in this country at the House Sparrow or English Sparrow, a common bird in England then as now. The South African coin which started all this discussion shows two Cape Sparrows, a close relative of the House Sparrow. None of these birds are closely related to the American Sparrows: song sparrow, chipping sparrow, fox sparrow etc. So much for the wonders of the precise use of language.

The answer to the Jeopardy question is Ulysses Grant.

COIN SHOW CALENDAR

LOCAL CHAIRMEN PLEASE NOTIFY THE EDITOR, Box 5625, Raleigh, NC 27650 of your plans as soon as possible to avoid conflicts. Information transmitted in writing is safer, but between issues inquiries and information can be recieved during evening hours at 919-832-4128. or during business hours at 919-515-2995.

FEB 1997

1-2 Piedmont Triad Coin & Stamp show, Am. Legion Hall, Creek 'Ridge Rd, Greensboro NC, Linda Pridgen, Box 10678, Greensboro NC 27404

8-9 Triangle Collectibles, Ramada Inn, Burlington NC, Barry Ciociola, 5111 Russel Rd., Durham NC 27712

8-9 Low Country Coin Club, Best Western, Charleston SC, William "Doc" Martens, Box 71268, Charleston SC 29411

14-16 Charlotte Coin Club, Merchandise Mart, Charlotte NC, Jerry Sabjel, Box 33292, Charlotte NC 28233, 800-847-2842

21-23 Greenville Coin Club, Holiday Inn, Roper Mtn Rd, Greenville SC, Don McAlister, 2207 W. Parker Rd., Greenville SC 29611

MAR 1997

7-9 Suburban Washington, Baltimore Conv Center, Ed Kuszmar, Box 4049, Boca Raton FL 33429

14-16 Tennessee State Numismatic Soc, Days Inn, I-75, Ext 1, Chattanooga TN, Terry Hess, 831, Clemmons NC 27012

15-16 Carolina Coin & Stamp Conventions, Holshouser Bldg, State Fairgrounds, Raleigh NC, Ted Hendrick, Box 12052, Raleigh NC 27605

20-22 American Numismatic Assn, Cleveland Convention Center, Cleveland OH, Conv. Dept., 818 N. Cascade Ave., Colorado Springs CO 80903

APR 1997

5-6 Winston-Salem Coin Club, Elks Club, Silas Crk. Pkwy, Winston-Salem NC, Greg Cheek, Box 30106, Winston-Salem NC 27130

5-6 Piedmont Triad Coin & Stamp show, Am. Legion Hall, Creek 'Ridge Rd, Greensboro NC, Linda Pridgen, Box 10678, Greensboro NC 27404

11-13 Lower Cape Fear Coin Club, Elk's Lodge, Oleander Dr., Wilmington NC, David D. Porter, Box 971, Swansboro NC 28584

19-20 Salem Coin Club, Am Legion bldg, Salem VA, Emmett Yonce, 2040 Roanoke Rd, Daleville VA 24083

MAY 1997

16-18 Wake Forest Coins & Collector's Showcase, Scott Bldg, State Fairgrounds, Raleigh NC, George Rogers, Box 275, Wake Forest NC 27588

JUN 1997

13-15 Carolina Coin & Stamp Conventions, Merchandise Mart, Charlotte NC, Ted Hendrick, Box 12025, Raleigh NC 27605

20-22 Int'l Paper Money Show, Cook Conv. Ctr, Memphis TN, Mike Crabb, Box 17871, Memphis TN 38187

20-22 Parker Coin Club, Holiday Inn, Roper Mtn Rd, Greenville SC, Don McAlister, 2207 W. Parker Rd., Greenville SC 29611

28-29 Raleigh Coin Club, Scott Bldg, St. Fairgrounds, Raleigh NC, Halbert Carmichael, Box 5625, Raleigh NC 27650

JUL 1997

11-13 Metro Washington, Ramada Hotel, New Carrolton MD, Paul Singleton, 444 Maple Ave., Vienna VA 22180

12-13 Triangle Collectibles, Doubletree Inn, Durham NC, Barry Ciociola, 5111 Russel Rd., Durham NC 27712

12-13 Piedmont Triad Coin & Stamp show, Am. Legion Hall, Creek 'Ridge Rd, Greensboro NC, Linda Pridgen, Box 10678, Greensboro NC 27404

AUG 1997

7-10 Blue Ridge Numismatic Assn, NW Georgia Trade Center, Dalton GA, Ed Fritz, Box 692, Centerville OH 45459

9-10 Triangle Collectibles, Ramada Inn, Burlington NC, Barry Ciociola, 5111 Russel Rd., Durham NC 27712

14-17 Atlantic Rarities Coin Exposition, Convention Center, Baltimore MD, Tom Palmer, Box 6533, Baltimore MD 21219

22-24 Wake Forest Coins & Collector's Showcase, Scott Bldg, State Fairgrounds, Raleigh NC, George Rogers, Box 275, Wake Forest NC 27588

29-31 Peach State Coin Show, Howard Johnson Midtown, Atlanta GA, Bob O'Brien, 11285 Elkins Rd., Suite G-1B, Roswell GA 30076

SEP 1997

12-14 Carolina Coin & Stamp Conventions, Merchandise Mart, Charlotte NC, Ted Hendrick, Box 12052, Raleigh NC 27605

12-14 Paper Money Show, Days Inn Conv Center, Central Ave, Knoxville TN, Paul Garland, 1919 Rosemont Cir

20-21 Virginia Numismatic Assoc., Tyson's Westpark Hotel, McLean VA, ,

26-28 North Carolina Numismatic Assn., Village Green, Meadowview, Greensboro NC, Cy Dellinghger Box 25156, Charlotte NC 28229

OCT 1997

11-12 Piedmont Triad Coin & Stamp show, Am. Legion Hall, Creek 'Ridge Rd, Greensboro NC, Linda Pridgen, Box 10678, Greensboro NC 27404

NOV 1997

1-2 Triangle Collectibles, Doubletree Inn, Durham NC, Barry Ciociola, 5111 Russel Rd., Durham NC 27712

14-16 Suburban Washington, Convention Center, Baltimore MD, Ed Kszmar, Box 4949, Boca Raton FL 33429

15-16 Carolina Coin & Stamp Conventions, Holshouser Bldg, State Fairgrounds, Raleigh NC, Ted Hendrick, Box 12052, Raleigh NC 27605

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Winston-Salem NC 27130

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